

## **3 FAM 2630**

# **POSITION CLASSIFICATION**

*(TL:PER-476; 08-08-2003)*  
*(Office of Origin: DIR)*

### **3 FAM 2631 PURPOSE**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*  
*(State Only)*  
*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

This subchapter prescribes the authorities and responsibilities for developing and administering a sound position classification program within the Department of State for positions in the Senior Foreign Service, the Foreign Service, and Civil Service which includes positions in the Senior Executive Service, the General Schedule, and the Federal Wage System. Other positions (e.g., GG, AD) are also included unless explicitly excluded by law, Executive Order, or regulation.

### **3 FAM 2632 LEGAL BASIS**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*  
*(State Only)*  
*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. Section 501 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, authorizes the Secretary of State to classify positions in the Foreign Service.

b. Title 5 U.S.C. Chapters 51 and 53 are the basis for the Department's authority to classify positions in the Civil Service.

### **3 FAM 2633 DEPARTMENT POLICY**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*  
*(State Only)*  
*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

It is the Department's policy to provide equal pay for equal work, manage employees efficiently and effectively, and ensure that all employees and applicants for employment receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management. The Department classifies positions, consistent with:

- (1) Office of Personnel Management (OPM) standards and guides;

- (2) Department of State (DOS) standards and guides;
- (3) Position classification principles;
- (4) Sound position and organizational management principles; and
- (5) Linkages between the various pay systems and sound compensation practices and principles.

### **3 FAM 2634 EXCLUSIONS**

*(TL:PER-476; 08-08-2003)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. Positions excluded from this regulation are:

(1) Temporary appointments of U.S. *Citizen* Family Members to Foreign Service national positions (see 3 FAM 7000);

(2) Consular agents positions (see 3 FAM 8900);

(3) Executive Schedule, chiefs of missions, and ambassador at large positions (see 5 U.S.C. 5311—5316 and Section 302(a)(1) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended);

(4) Foreign Service National (FSN) positions (see 3 FAM 7000 and 3 FAH-2); and

(5) Other positions, explicitly, excluded from Foreign Service or Civil Service classification by law, Executive Order, or regulation.

b. In accordance with 5 CFR 304.103, consultants and experts are excepted from Title 5, position classification. Therefore, such positions do not require a classified position description or classification by *HR/CSP/C*.

### **3 FAM 2635 DEFINITIONS**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

*The following definitions apply to the material contained in this chapter.*

(1) **Audit:** an interview with one or more employees and/or supervisors to verify or gather information about a position that will provide a reliable basis for the accurate classification of positions.

(2) **Career ladder:** a group of positions in the Civil Service structure to identify work at increasing levels of difficulty and/or responsibility. An employee in a career ladder position is given grade-building experiences and is non-competitively promoted as the employee demonstrates the ability to perform at the next higher level. A promotion is dependent upon meeting qualification requirements, supervisory recommendations, and the continued presence of the higher level duties.

(3) **Civil Service position:** a position subject to classification under Title 5 U.S.C. Chapter 51.

(4) **Classification appeal:** an employee's official request to the Department and/or OPM to review the classification of a Civil Service position subject to Title 5 U.S.C. An appeal may involve a request to change the pay category, occupational series, title, and/or grade level.

(5) **Factor Evaluation System (FES):** a classification system for non-supervisory General Schedule positions under which positions are described and evaluated in terms of nine job-related factors, using a specified numerical point-rating system.

(6) **Federal Wage System (FWS):** the pay system applicable to employees in recognized trades or crafts or in manual-labor occupations in which trade, craft, or laboring experience and knowledge is the paramount requirement.

(7) **Foreign Service position:** a position established under authority of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

(8) **Full performance level:** the full working level of a Civil Service position or the top grade level in a career ladder.

(9) **General Schedule (GS) position:** any position to which subchapter III of Chapter 53 of 5 U.S.C. applies. These include a range of levels of difficulty and responsibility for covered positions from grades GS-01 to GS-15. It is designated by the GS pay plan. Positions above grade GS-15 are included in the Senior Executive Service (SES) or Senior Level (SL), which are outside the General Schedule pay plan.

(10) **Identical and/or additional position:** a position that is the same as a previously classified position in every respect, including the same organizational location.

(11) **Maintenance review:** an on-going review of all positions in an organization to ensure that classifications and position descriptions are correct and that unnecessary positions are abolished.

(12) **Major duties and responsibilities:** those duties and responsibilities which are assigned and performed on a regular and recurring basis; require a substantial amount of an employee's time; and will determine, at least in part, the qualifications required for effective position accomplishment. All major duties and responsibilities must be described in the position description of record in sufficient detail to be classifiable.

(13) **Position classification:** the allocation of a position to a pay plan or pay system and title, series, and grade level based on the analysis of a position's duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements.

(14) **Position description (PD):** an official written description of management's assignment of duties, responsibilities, and supervisory relationships to a position. Groups of like positions within the same organization (identical and/or additional positions) may be covered by a single position description.

(15) **Position management:** the planned structuring of the number, kinds, and levels of positions to accomplish mission objectives, within the framework of full time equivalent (FTE) ceilings and budget resources allotted to approved organizations.

(16) **Rank-in-person:** a practice by which a class or grade is attached to each Foreign Service employee based on individual qualifications, seniority, and performance. Personal rank remains the same regardless of the class of the position to which assigned.

(17) **Reconsideration request:** a written request to the Director, Office of Civil Service Personnel Management (*HR/CSP*) by a supervisor or manager to review the classification of a position.

(18) **Senior Executive Service (SES):** a personnel system for senior executives classified above GS-15 pursuant to section 5108 of Title 5 in level IV or V of the Executive Schedule, or an equivalent position, which is not required to be filled by an appointment by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The SES system provides for a uniform, government-wide system for developing, selecting, rewarding and managing an effective team of high-level supervisors.

(19) **Senior Foreign Service (SFS):** a segment of the Foreign Service, which parallels the general flag and flag officer ranks of the military and the Senior Executive Service, and offers an effective framework to foster greater development of leadership and policymaking capabilities both at the national and the international levels.

(20) **Standard position description (SPD):** a position description that is generic and can be used for a number of like positions throughout the Department. These position descriptions are developed by the Bureau of *Human Resources*.

(21) **Supervisory certification:** a statement on the cover sheet (Form OF-8, Position Description) of a PD signed by the supervisor certifying that the duties and responsibilities which are described are accurate and the position is necessary.

(22) **Vacancy review:** the review of a vacant position by a supervisor and/or position classification specialist to determine if the position is still necessary and if the position is properly classified.

### **3 FAM 2636 ADMINISTRATION OF THE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. The Department administers the classification system for Foreign Service positions, in accordance, with authorities provided in Section 501 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. Chapters 51 and 53 of Title 5 U.S.C. provide statutory principles and guidance for classifying Civil Service positions. Written standards or guides and conformance with accepted compensation practices are an integral part of the system and law, and require compliance. Employee morale and confidence will increase if positions are based on a sound and reasonable classification system.

b. Legal and regulatory requirements and operating responsibilities are fulfilled by promptly and accurately classifying positions consistent with classification standards and other approved guides, using sound judgment and considering all pertinent information.

c. Position classification is an essential component of position management. Position classification specialists (or others responsible for position classification) should advise and assist managers and supervisors in the implementation of related principles and goals. Position classifiers should, therefore, promote economical position structuring and grading within an organization, in order to optimize efficiency and productivity. They should also advise management on avoidance of overlap in functions, alignment of the organization consistent with current resources, allocation of positions consistent with approved staffing, and established career ladders.

d. In accordance with the guidance found in this *subchapter* and meeting the deputy *position* criteria, the number of deputy and assistant positions should be minimized, in order to prevent unnecessary administrative levels and confusion of authority. Deputy and assistant positions should be placed in a grade or class which is at least one grade or class lower than that of the position above it, *in order to* differentiate the levels of difficulty and responsibility of the work performed.

e. The *Department's* position classification program should be administered so as to provide management with information and advice on organization, reorganization, and other management matters. *The program should also* provide timely and complete service and assistance to all levels of management.

f. A desk audit request for a position previously audited may be submitted when permanent substantive changes have occurred and the incumbent has been performing the new duties for at least one year. If both criteria are not met, *HR/CSP/C* or others delegated this responsibility will return the position without action.

### **3 FAM 2637 DEPARTMENT OF STATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3 FAM 2637.1 The Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources (M/DGHR)**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

Assists the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary for Management (M) by directing the formulation and implementation of personnel policies and programs governing the personnel administration of the Department.

### **3 FAM 2637.2 Director, Office of Resource Management and Organization Analysis (HR/RMA)**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. Develops policies, plans, and procedures for classification and pay management of U.S. Foreign Service *positions and pay management of Civil Service positions*. Develops policies and procedures for Civil Service position classification appeals, and adjudicates position classification appeals for the Department.

b. Implements the classification programs, policies, and standards, and develops operational procedures for the classification of U.S. Foreign Service positions abroad.

### **3 FAM 2637.3 Director, Office of Civil Service Personnel Management (HR/CSP)**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

Manages the position classification program for Civil Service and domestic Foreign Service positions, and provides oversight for delegated classification functions. Develops *policies*, operational procedures and guidance *for classification of Civil Service positions*. Exempted positions (e.g., GG, AD) are administered similarly.

### **3 FAM 2637.4 Assistant Secretaries with Delegated Classification Authority**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. In accordance with Title 5 U.S.C. 302, some assistant secretaries are delegated position classification authority. In accordance with the terms of the written agreement, the delegation of authority applies to all Civil Service positions at and below the grade 13 level under the General Schedule and equivalent level positions under the Prevailing Rate System. The delegation of authority does not extend to positions encompassing personnel duties or Foreign Service and Schedule C positions. *HR/CSP* retains the classification authority for these positions.

b. Each assistant secretary must designate, in writing, the official(s) responsible for executing signature authority. This official(s) shall be held accountable for fulfilling all requirements of Title 5 U.S.C. Chapter 51 governing position classification.

### **3 FAM 2637.5 Managers and Supervisors**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. The certification of position descriptions, which ensures the accuracy of the position description, is the responsibility of the manager and/or supervisor. Each manager and supervisor has a personal and legal responsibility, when determining a job assignment, to ensure that the job is properly described. Misrepresentation of actual duties and responsibilities of a position constitutes mismanagement and misuse of a monetary resource. Therefore, a manager and/or supervisor must establish positions and position descriptions that clearly reflect the employee's assigned duties and responsibilities.

b. Managers and supervisors should participate in the development and use of classification standards or guides and agency guides. They should recognize changes in position content and initiate re-descriptions of duties and assign duties commensurate with operational needs. Managers and supervisors should also consult with and inform position classification specialists (or others responsible for position classification) through their executive offices of impending program, operational, or position changes. Included in these responsibilities is establishing and maintaining with each specific area of responsibility an effective position structure consistent with approved authorizations.

### **3 FAM 2637.6 Office of Personnel Management (OPM)**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

OPM has the oversight responsibility for ensuring that the Department effectively administers its position classification program for General Schedule and Federal Wage System positions *that are* under Title 5 U.S.C.

## **3 FAM 2638 PROGRAM MAINTENANCE**

### **3 FAM 2638.1 Implementation of Classification Actions and/or Findings**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

Whenever a classification analysis results in an action and/or finding (e.g., reclassification) affecting a position(s), such action and/or finding must be initiated by the supervisor or manager of the position and/or made effective, generally within 30 calendar days from the date of the report or the date the findings are submitted to the bureau in which the position is located, whichever is later. If circumstances prevent this from occurring, a memorandum must be submitted notifying the appropriate office director regarding the reasons for inaction and the anticipated effective date.

### **3 FAM 2638.2 Maintenance Review of Position Descriptions and Classifications**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. Each bureau's *position description* (PDs) shall be reviewed, when necessary, to ensure *their* adequacy and accuracy and to ensure the proper evaluation and classification of all positions within an organization.

b. The original of the position descriptions classified and/or established under the delegation of authority along with the evaluation statements are maintained by the bureau or office. In addition, a copy of these documents must be forwarded to *HR/CSP/C*.

c. All records, files, and other material incidental to the classification of the position must be maintained by the bureau and be made available for review by the Bureau of *Human Resources* and/or other regulatory entities.

d. Vacancy reviews will be conducted whenever a position becomes vacant, *in order* to determine if the position is still necessary and if it is classified accurately. Classification specialists or others responsible for position classification will conduct audits of all positions that have significantly changed. *HR/CSP* will provide a report that covers the findings and recommendations with a deadline to ensure these findings have been followed-up.

e. Organizational reviews and studies will be conducted, in accordance with the provisions of the Department's position management program (see 1 FAM 015 and 3 FAM 2610), to ensure that positions are structured and staffed in the most economic manner consistent with effective mission accomplishment.

f. The benefits of maintenance reviews include more accurate position descriptions, more accurate classification decisions, an opportunity to advise and assist managers and supervisors, and a more economical way to classify positions.

g. Special studies and surveys will be conducted on an "as needed" basis as determined by the Office of Resource Management and Organization Analysis (HR/RMA) and/or the bureaus, to prepare standards or furnish advice to management on special issues.

## **3 FAM 2639 RECONSIDERATION OF CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS—FOREIGN SERVICE AND CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS**

### **3 FAM 2639.1 Reconsideration**

*(TL:PER-438; 02-26-2002)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

- a. Reconsideration is entirely at the discretion of HR/CSP.
- b. Any request for reconsideration of the classification of a position.
  - (1) *Should* be presented in writing to the Director, HR/CSP through the *requesting office's* Executive Office;
  - (2) *Should* be requested by the supervisor *of* the position;
  - (3) *Should* state the reason(s) for believing the position to be incorrectly classified;
  - (4) *Should* specify (when applicable) the requested title, pay plan, series, and/or grade;
  - (5) *Should* provide additional supporting material or information; and
  - (6) *Must* be received within 60 calendar days of the date of the last audit or date of the classified position.

### **3 FAM 2639.2 Classification Appeal**

*(TL:PER-382; 03-24-2000)*

*(State Only)*

*(Applies to Foreign Service & Civil Service Employees)*

a. Civil Service employees who desire to file an appeal should follow the procedures that are provided in 3 FAM 2640.

b. There are no provisions for Foreign Service employees to file an appeal.